Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A telecommunications network, providing non-dedicated circuit pathways between access nodes and switches in the network, comprising:

a plurality of access nodes disposed about a service area of the telecommunications network;

a switch pool adapted to communicate with the access nodes in order to provide access by a plurality of user terminals to services of the telecommunications network;

at least two media gateways providing one or more connections between the access nodes and the switch pool via a plurality of circuit pathways; and

a media gateway selection node operably coupled to the media gateways and the switch pool, the media gateway selection node configured for connecting a switch and a target access node and comprising means for:

checking a data structure, coupled to the MGWSN, wherein relationships between circuit pathways and associated identity codes, media gateways and access nodes are stored;

selecting the media gateway;

allocating a particular circuit pathway between [[a]] the switch and [[a]] the target access node, by ~~wherein said allocating step comprises:~~

allocating [[a]] an available, non-dedicated circuit pathway between the switch and the selected media gateway; and

allocating [[a]] an available, non-dedicated circuit pathway between the selected media gateway and the target access node and

upon termination of communications between the switch and the target access node, the switch informing the MGWSN that the call is released and

the circuit pathway between the switch, the media gateway and the target access node is released and the database is updated.

2. (Original) The network of claim 1 wherein the switches comprise Mobile Switching Centers (MSCS).

3. (Original) The network of claim 1 wherein the access nodes comprise Base Station Controllers (BSCS).

4. (Original) The network of claim 1 wherein the access nodes comprise Radio Network Servers (RNSs).

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The network of claim 1 [[5]] wherein the data structure comprises a media gateway selection database.

7. (Original) The network of claim 1 wherein the identity codes comprise Circuit Identity Codes (CICS).

8. (Currently Amended) A method of providing non-dedicated circuit pathways between access nodes and switches in a telecommunications network having a plurality of media gateways operably connected to a media gateway selection node, the method comprising the steps of:

checking a data base, coupled with the media gateway selection node (MGWSN), wherein relationships between circuit pathways and associated identity codes, media gateways and access nodes are stored;

selecting a media gateway;

allocating, by the media gateway selection node, a circuit pathway between a switch and a target access node, wherein said allocating step comprises:

allocating [[a]] an available non-dedicated circuit pathway between the switch and the selected media gateway;

allocating [[a]] an available non-dedicated circuit pathway between the selected media gateway and the target access node; and

~~subsequently~~ upon termination of communications between the switch and the target access node, the switch informing the MWGSN that the call is released and the circuit pathway between the switch, the media gateway and the target access node is released and the database is updated. ~~, de-allocating the circuit pathway between the switch and selected media gateway; and de-allocating the circuit pathway between the selected media gateway and the target access node.~~

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the steps of selecting, allocating, releasing and updating the database ~~de-allocating~~ are performed dynamically.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of maintaining the media gateway selection node for selecting, allocating, and releasing ~~de-allocating~~ circuit pathways.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of maintaining a switch pool comprising the switches of the telecommunications network, the switch pool operably connected to the media gateway selection node.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A media gateway selection node for use in a telecommunications network for providing non-dedicated circuit pathways between access nodes and switches of a switch pool in the network, comprising:

database means for storing and accessing data concerning media gateways, access nodes, switches, and circuit pathways of the network;

means for defining relationships among the media gateways, access nodes, switches, and circuit pathways; and

means for reserving and releasing circuit pathways as needed for use between individual switches and individual access nodes, wherein the means for reserving and releasing the circuit pathways is configured for:

selecting a media gateway;

allocating a circuit pathway between a switch and a target access node, wherein said allocating step comprises:

allocating [[a]] an available non-dedicated circuit pathway between the switch and the selected media gateway;

allocating [[a]] an available non-dedicated circuit pathway between the selected media gateway and the target access node; and

upon termination of use of the allocated circuit pathway, ~~subsequently de-allocating~~ releasing each allocated circuit pathway between the switch and the target access node and updating the database means.

14. (Previously Presented) The media gateway selection node according to claim 13 wherein the data concerning media gateways, access nodes, switches, and circuit pathways, further comprises load carrying capacity.

15. (Previously Presented) The media gateway selection node according to claim 13 wherein the means for defining relationships among the media gateways, access nodes, switches, and circuit pathways is adapted to perform dynamically.

16. (Previously Presented) The media gateway selection node according to claim 13 wherein the means for reserving and releasing circuit pathways as needed for use between individual switches and individual access nodes is adapted to perform dynamically.